companies in the pursuit of procuring of their feed stock at the best possible price.

FAI and urea companies have held a series of discussion regarding the infrastructure facilities at ports, mode of inland transportation, quality of naphtha and modalities of issuing tenders etc.

The issue pertaining to decontrol of urea marketing is being examined as part of the proposed new pricing policy, which is under the consideration of the Government.

Testing of Pro-biotic fertilizer

1800. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Council for Agricultural Research has completed the testing of organic fertilizer know as "Pro-biotic" fertilizer;

(b) if so, the findings thereof; and

(c) if not by when the test would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The testing of Pro-biotic fertilizer developed by Institute of Studies and Transformation, Ahmedabad could be accomplished as soon as the agency completed the requisite formalities for testing with Indian Institute of Soil Science (IISS) Bhopal.

Closure of Sindri unit of FCI

1801. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sindri unit of Fertilizer Corporation of India has been shut down since 16th March, 2002;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the plant has been restarted;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) te present status of revival plan of Sindri and other units of FCI at Ramagundam, Talcher and Gorakhpur?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR) : (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The operations of Sindri unit of Fertilizer Corporation of India (FCI) remain shut down since 16.3.2002 due to low level of feedstock. The operations have not been restarted due to lack of working capital because of fund constraints and absence of firm commitment from input suppliers.

(e) A Group of Ministers (GoM) has been constituted to examine the rehabilitation proposals of sick fertilizer Public Sector Undertakings including the Sindri unit of FCI. After considering the interim recommendations of GoM, Government have decided to close the Ramagundam, Talcher and Gorakhpur units of FCI as these have not been found viable.

Changes in fertilizer Retention Price Scheme

1802. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the fertilizer companies are expected to payback over Rs.1,800 crore as a result of Government's decision to introduce changes in the retention price scheme;

(b) if so, whether this would be in addition to Rs.1,374 crore already recovered by the Union Government; and

(c) if so, to what extent the Government would help to bring end to the uncertainty and enable the industry to take appropriate decision under a stable policy environment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI TAPAN SIKADAR): (a) and (b) Policy parameters for 7th and 8th pricing periods under the existing Retention Price Scheme (RPS) have been approved by the competent authority on 16.5.2002 and have also been communicated to all urea companies on 4.6.2002. The final unit-wise determination of retention prices based on approved parameters would entail updating the norms of the various units in respect of salaries and wages, utilities, repairs and maintenance, consumption